

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A heterobifunctional compound represented by the formula:



where

Z represents H or alkyl;

POLY and POLY' are poly(alkylene oxide) groups that can be the same or different and are represented by the formula $-(\text{CH}_2\text{CHRO})_n-\text{CH}_2\text{CHR}-$ in which R is H or alkyl, and n ranges from about 10 to about 4000;

Q represents a functional group other than an acrylate group; and

W represents a hydrolytically unstable linkage that hydrolyzes at pH 7 and 37°C.

2. (Original) The compound of Claim 1, wherein POLY and POLY' are poly(ethylene glycol).
3. (Previously Presented) The compound of Claim 1, wherein W comprises a hydrolyzable covalent bond selected from the group consisting of carboxylate esters, orthoesters, imines, acetals, peptide bonds, phosphate esters, and oligonucleotides.
4. (Previously Presented) The compound of Claim 1, wherein Q is selected from the group consisting of aldehydes, carboxylic acids, sulfonate esters, amines, hydrazides, orthopyridyl disulfides, thiols, carbonate esters, N-succinimidyl esters, isocyanates, alcohols, and epoxide.